DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 359 838 FL 800 655

AUTHOR	de Barros, Judy; And Others
TITLE	Storytelling Project. Southeast Asian Women's Alliance.
INSTITUTION	Refugee Women's Alliance, Seattle, WA.
PUB DATE	Jun 90
NOTE	23p.; For a related document, see FL 800 656.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Creative Works (Literature,Drama,Fine Arts) (030)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; Community Organizations; *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Pluralism; Curriculum Development; *English (Second Language); Ethnic Groups; *Females; *Folk Culture; Legends; *Refugees; *Story Telling
IDENTIFIERS	Washington (Seattle)

ABSTRACT

Geared to refugee women, the storytelling project developed by the Refugee Women's Alliance (formerly the South East Asian Women's Alliance) in Seattle, Washington, combines language, cross-cultural, and family skills. The project included development of the storytelling curriculum for English-as-a-Second-Language students, training instructors, collecting stories and illustrations, and printing the stories. The curriculum was divided into two parts: collecting and sharing the stories, and follow-up ESL activities. Bilingual aides help collect stories from beginning pre-literate students. Folktales representing five ethnic groups (Cambodian, Eritrean, ethnic Chinese, Lao, and Soviet Ukrainian) are compiled in this document, which also suggests techniques for sharing and polishing stories. Some beginning storytelling resources are provided. The follow-up ESL activities described include anticipation (pre-story) activities, comprehension checks, oral and written language experience activities, and cross-cultural exercises. Specific ESL activities are geared to one Lao folktale. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education) (LB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Southeast Asian Women's Alliance
3004 South Alaska ~ Seattle, WA 98108
(206)721-0243

"Hands Across Cultures ~ Women Helping Women"

ED359838

STORYTELLING PROJECT

Southeast Asian Women's Alliance

February-June 1990

Judy de Barros, Project Coordinator
Elizabeth Mitchell, ESL Specialist
Cathy Spagnoli, Storytelling Specialist

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Judy De Barros

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

FL 800 654

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SEAWA STORYTELLING PROJECT

In March, 1990, South East Asian Women's Alliance (now Refugee Women's Alliance or REWA) received a grant from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop an ESL storytelling project. REWA's mission, to help refugee women achieve self-sufficiency in the United States, was taken into consideration with this integrated project; a project combining language, cross-cultural, and family skills development. The following storytelling curriculum culminated in the printing of folktales representing the ethnic diversity of the women at REWA and was used in REWA's multicultural pre-school and ESL classes. Folktales representing five ethnic groups - Cambodian, Eritrean, ethnic Chinese, Lao, and Soviet Ukrainian - were compiled.

Our methodology included the following four steps:

1. Develop storytelling curriculum.
2. Train instructors.
3. Collect stories and illustrations.
4. Print stories.

The curriculum was divided into two parts: 1) the collecting and sharing of stories, and 2) the follow-up ESL activities. A workshop for instructors, covering both areas, was held prior to the collection of stories in ESL classes.

The intended audience for this curriculum is beginning to advanced refugee ESL students. It should be noted that collecting stories from beginning pre-literate students proved to be very difficult. Because of this, bilingual aides were often used. The resulting level of English in the some of the stories may be higher than had it come solely from the students. Optional equipment includes puppets, flannel boards, and drawings.

COLLECTING STORIES

Storytelling is a wonderful tool to use in ESL classrooms. One simple way to start is with story collecting. If possible, start by familiarizing yourself with some popular stories from your students' cultures. Then you can help fuel memories by telling a part of one story. Sometimes, it is easiest to suggest a theme: "how and why" - "animal tales" - "hero/shero tales" - "trickster and fools." For example, try a trickster.

Tricksters come in all shapes and sizes, but usually always trick those stronger and more powerful! The tales of High John, a slave who constantly tricked his master, kept up morale and passed on hope during slave times. Birbal from India used his wit in the king's court to help justice be done and to gently criticize the king. Lazy Dragon, a thief in Sung dynasty China, stole from the greedy rich to give to the needy poor. Xieng Mieng was a Lao man who loved to teach kings and monks needed lessons. Judge Rabbit from Cambodia helped to right wrongs and protected the weak.

After you've given some story examples, have students recall their stories, in small groups or in pairs. Use a tape recorder, if feasible. Encourage visual sketches for those with little English. Have stories taken down exactly as told. Don't edit or change the teller's language. The original is most valuable. After the story is collected, try to discover all that you can about the story: when it was told, where it was told, and by whom. You may find valuable clues to that culture's storytelling traditions. Collecting tales takes time, unless you happen upon a real community storyteller. Otherwise, stories come out slowly as memories bump into each other. Do not expect full, detailed tales. Many people can remember only fragments and bits. But even the bits will be useful and can be shaped into tellable stories.

SHARING STORIES

<u>Warm-ups:</u> Once you have several stories, you will want to help students share these tales with an audience. Storytelling warm-ups are fun to use at this point. They can loosen up and enliven the class while helping students explore their own storytelling possibilities.

Voice: Yawn, stretch, hum. Pant like a dog. Relax the voice-making muscles. Try sounds. Students can make environmental sounds or animal sounds from their own countries. Not all animal sounds are alike from one culture to another. In Khmer, a rooster sounds like this: "Ko ked ke kud." Tape some of your students' examples for fun!

Tongue twisters: Repeat "Peggy Babcock" five times quickly. Or try a Spanish favorite to loosen tongues: "Mi mama me mi mima mucho." The instructor's willingness to try tongue-twisters herself will help students warm up to the idea of making amusing and silly sounds.
Traditional riddles contain marvelous images, perfect for sharpening storytelling language. Try some Indian ones and collect more from students:

Water of two colors in a single pot.	(egg)
One blanket covers the earth.	(sky)
An old woman who only eats wood.	(wood stove)

Gestures: Some people will feel shy to use body movement. Begin with simple mimes of daily actions - do them in various speeds and moods. Try "Charades" or "Simon Says." Instructors should be prepared to model silly and serious gestures. Students will feel more at ease with gestures of all kinds if the instructor is comfortable modeling and participating. Invite someone in to share some American sign language or a dancer who knows signs from the beautiful Khmer dance. Have students describe common objects using gestures only.

POLISHING YOUR STORIES

Now, one tale can be chosen and polished for telling. The ways to shape it obviously depend upon the language skills and background of your students. Encourage students to use their own skills. A student who loves to draw might tell best with a visual prop that she made. One who sings might add a melody to the tale. Have fun as you help students experiment!

Choosing stories: If you have several stories, show students how to choose stories that are best for telling. Look for stories that will appeal to the audience; with plots that move and a limited cast of clearly drawn characters; pleasing rhythms, and rhymes; vivid images; elements of suspense,

humor, pathos, etc. Stories with repetition of words or phrases are particularly helpful for language practice.

Learning stories: Encourage visualization. Have the stories drawn or mapped out. If needed, use a simple script, with pictures and just a few important sentences. Use a tape recorder for honest feedback. Repetition in the stories provides good language practice, makes the learning of a story easier, and often improves the telling.

Adding Meat to the Bones: As soon as students remember the tales clearly, they can start to enrich them through gestures, sounds, and language that captures a character or a setting, and by developing a strong opening and closing. Encourage the use of gestures,word images, and sound words from their own cultures. Songs and ideas for audience participation can be used. Props that fit the story and the teller can also be used: felt board, puppets, simple costumes, and folk toys. Other visual props include a large drawing or painting or "kamishibai" - Japanese story cards, consisting of about eight to a story, with each important story scene drawn in sequence on the cards.

Performing tips: The tale must now be told and retold in front of live listeners. Try for quiet settings with dimmed lighting and seating close to the teller. Help tellers relax, too, with a laugh or two beforehand. Some students may appreciate the opportunity to tell the story in their native language first, followed by their English version. When the English version is told, instructors and interpreters (if present) should hold back and let the stories come from the students. Enjoy! Remember, as the Vietnamese say, "What is carved on rock will wear away in time. What is told from mouth to mouth will live forever!"

A FEW BEGINNING STORYTELLING RESOURCES:

National Storytelling Resource Center
P.O. Box 112
Jonesborough, Tennessee 37659
Send for their catalogue and membership information.

Baker, A. and Greene, E. Storytelling: Art and Technique. N.Y.: R.R. Bowker, 1977. Many useful hints and extensive book and story lists.

Folk Tales of the World series. R. Dorson, gen.ed. University of Chicago Press, Illinois. Excellent books of stories set in their cultural contexts.

Sawyer, Ruth. The Way of the Storyteller. N.Y.: Viking. 1970. A storyteller's inspiring thoughts and her own favorites.

Shedlock, Marie. The Art of the Storyteller. N.Y.: Dover, 1951. Another classic by an older teller with her favorite tales as well.

FOLLOW-UP ESL ACTIVITIES

The follow-up ESL activities are ways to make the most of the language skills involved with telling a story. When language skills improvement is part of one's goal, it is tempting to jump right into these activities. However, the importance of the story collecting and sharing cannot be overemphasized. There is much language activity during that stage and it should not be hurried. When the stories have been well developed and the students are ready to share them, then it may be time for some of the activities listed below. These suggested ESL activities can be divided into four categories: 1) anticipation exercises, 2) comprehension checks, 3) language experience activities, and 4) cross-cultural discussions.

I. ANTICIPATION (or pre-story) ACTIVITIES

Anticipation exercises have many purposes. They enhance comprehension by encouraging students to think about what might occur in the story - what issues or events might come up and what the contest is. These exercises also give students a safe, fun opportunity to take risks in English and make guesses. Some students may be more comfortable with guessing

than others. Language learning is full of ambiguity. Anticipation exercises provide students with a way to become more comfortable with this ambiguity.

1. Look at illustrations, cards, map, or story strip. Let the students make guesses - don't tell the story.
2. Look at props - puppets, flannel pieces.
3. Demonstrate a gesture that you plan to use in the telling of the story and have students guess what it might mean. They will be eager to listen to the story to see whether or not their guesses were correct.

II. COMPREHENSION CHECKS

Students need to understand the basics - vocabulary and the general ideas and movement of the story.

1. Check understanding of vocabulary.
2. Check general comprehension by going through the question hierarchy: yes/no; either/or; where, when, what, how; why.

III. LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

Storytelling and the Language Experience Approach work hand in hand to provide students with a natural way to use oral and written English. The story told by a student is meaningful to that student. Once it is told, the task is to make the most of that meaningful story so that students have a chance to recycle and expand the language and language skills learned from telling the story.

After the story is strong (in terms of being told), have the students who are able to, write the story. If a student is not able to write yet, have her dictate the story to you. It is important for pre-literates to feel at ease using the language they have. Writing and reading can be intimidating. For this reason, the stories should be written in the student's own words. This means there may be errors in the writings. More advanced students may request and may be ready for help with their grammar. Pre-literate students may need

practice with other aspects of the language before they are ready for grammar instruction.

After the stories are written, have students read their stories. Follow up with some of the activities listed below.

Oral activities

1. Students draw on index cards and retell the story.
2. Provide one set of index cards with pictures and another set with matching words - have students match the picture with the word.
3. Play Concentration with the cards.
4. Use the index cards for categorizing practice: find all the verbs, all the words that start with "b".
5. Practice verb tenses with the cards.
6. Use Total Physical Response (TPR), gestures, puppets, a flannel board - anything that combines some physical movement and the use of language.
7. Map a story or make a storystrip; practice retelling the story.
8. Keep grammatical structures that naturally arise in mind.
9. Provide practice with different ways of saying the same thing.
10. Change the story - "What if ...?"

Written Activities

1. Put sentences in the right order.
2. Put sentence halves together.
3. Cloze test (also known as fill-in-the-blanks: words are left out of the text at regular intervals, every nth word).
4. Use five new vocabulary words in non-story related sentences.
5. Using the complete text, underline certain categories of words (adjectives, words that show someone was talking, etc.).
6. Write a play based on the story. Have students take roles and perform!

IV. CROSS-CULTURAL EXERCISE

You are apt to have students from many different cultures in your class. Storytelling provides a unique opportunity to share cultural information in a relaxed setting. The exercise described below consists of five parts. Work through each of the five parts in the order given.

1. Tell or read the story
2. Describe (comprehension check)
3. Personalize
4. Cultural comparison
5. What do you think?

Two books helpful in providing ideas for the follow-up activities are:

For the Language Experience Approach: Tales from the Homeland: Developing the Language Experience Approach by Anita Molly Bell and Som Dy, Tacoma Community House Volunteer Training Project.

For the cross-cultural activity: Language and Culture in Conflict by Nina Wallerstein, Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Reading, Massachusetts, 1983.

For the purposes of this project, one story, developed and told by Laotian women at REWA, was selected to serve as a model for follow-up activities. The story is below, followed by story-specific activities.

A LAO FOLK STORY

There is one family, husband, wife, the dog, and the pig. They are farmers. One day, the husband, the pig, and the dog go work in the farm. Wife stays home and cook. When she finish cooking, she went and get the husband, the dog, and the pig come to eat. The wife ask husband, pig, and dog, who work hard today. The husband, said that he and the pig work very hard all day. The dog didn't do anything. The dog said that he worked very hard too. If she doesn't believe him, go take a look at the farm. They went and look at the farm. They saw the dog's footprints all over the farm. They went home. The wife gave the dog better food than the pig. The pig got mad, then ran away to the forest. They dog stay with the couple. The couple have nobody to work in the farm for them.

Anticipation Exercises:

Use student drawing of farm with dog pawprints.

Questions:

1. What do you see in this picture?
2. Is this in the city or in the country?
   on a farm?
3. What do you think is growing here?
4. What animals do you usually find on a farm?
   What animals live on a farm?
5. What work needs to be done on a farm? A lot of work or a little work.
6. Who does the work on a farm?

Comprehension Check:
(after the reading or telling of the story)

Have individual pictures of the husband, wife, dog, pig, the wife cooking, the dinner table, two dishes of food, etc. Any picture that you think is important for reviewing the story. Have students retell the story by using the pictures.

Yes/No Questions:
1. Is there a horse in this story?
2. Did the wife do the cooking?
3. Did the dog work hard?

Either/Or:
1. Who worked with the pig and the dog, the husband or the wife?
2. Did the pig or the dog have more footprints all over the farm.
3. Who got more food for dinner, the pig or the dog?

W/H Questions:
1. Where did the dog, pig, and husband go while the wife cooked?
2. What was the wife looking for when she went to look at the farm?

Why Questions:

1. Why did the wife ask who worked hard?
2. Why did the husband say that he and the pig worked hard?
3. Why did the wife look at the farm?
4. Why did the pig run away?

Language Experience Activities:

1. Vocabulary cards for Concentration, picture cards for matching - might include the following words (depending on focus of class and level of students): pig, dog, wife, husband, farm, home, cook, work, look,mad, forest, ran.

2. Verbs: is/are, go/went, work, stay/s, finish, get/got,came, ask,said, do, believe, take a look, run away, saw, gave, have.

3. Find words that begin with ... "d" - dog/dog's,day, didn't, do.

4. Other grammatical structures that could be explored depending on the level of the student: comparatives - big, bigger; small, smaller; good, better (regarding the portions of food). Phrasal verbs - take a look; run away.

"What if ..." questions:

1. What if the dog had lied? What would have happened? Would the dog run away?
2. What if the wife, pig, and dog worked on the farm and the husband stayed home. What would have happened?

Reading/Writing practice:

1. Make sentence strips. Have students put in the right order.
2. Make sentence halves. Have students match halves.
3. Cloze test (sample below):

There is one family, husband, wife, the _____, and the pig. They are farmers. One _____, the husband, the pig and the dog _____ work in the farm. Wife stays home and _____. When she finish cooking, she went and _____ the husband, the dog, and the pig _____ to eat. The wife ask husband, pig, _____ dog, who work hard today. The husband, _____ that he and the pig work very _____ all day. The dog didn't do anything. _____ dog said that he worked very hard _____. If she doesn't believe him, go take _____ look at the farm. They went and _____ at the farm. They saw the dog's _____ all over the farm. They went home. _____ wife gave the dog better food than _____ pig. The pig got mad, then ran away _____ the forest. The dog stay with the _____. The couple have nobody to work in _____ farm for them.

4. Vocabulary practice: use five words in non-story related sentences.

5. Write a play based on the story. One group of students did this and held a performance for the Evenstart pre-school class at REWA.

Cross-cultural exercises:

1. Anticipation exercises (see earlier)
2. Tell/read story.
3. Comprehension check.
4. Personalize - have you ever worked on a farm? Had a garden? Owned a pig? Owned a dog? Is farm work hard? What did you do? Have you ever looked for animal footprints?
5. Cultural comparison- are there any stories similar to this one in your culture?
6. What do you think about this story? Who would you want to be - the wife, the husband, the pig, or the dog? Why?

SUMMARY

In conclusion, the goals of this curriculum project were to develop "natural" language skills through storytelling, encourage intergenerational communication, and keep alive tales of a people separated from their native land. Storytelling by refugees holds great significance. It provides refugees with an opportunity to share stories of their choosing, whether cultural folktales, as discussed here, or personal stories of flight, as seen in finely stitched Hmong storycloths. These stories empower refugees with a way to keep a part of their original cultural identity and to share this with others, including their own children.

told by the New Americans

The Refugee Women's Alliance
Seattle, Washington

Design and Typesetting by Jo Eisner

The Refugee Women's Alliance
Seattle, Washington

Evenstart Students

From Ethiopia - Eritria
Like Abraha
Letikeden Fremedian
Asefash Gbreab
Shashu Hagos
Aberash Tekola
Aberehet Wereta
Staff: Tsege Tsegay

From Laos - Khmuu and Mein
Sevang Bounthoung
Bounthai Kittivong
Onh Manivanh
Manivanh Oudone
Feyseng Saechao
Manvern Saelee
Chanhom Saengchan
Naihin Saeteurn
Staff: Kim Vandevong

From the Ukraine
Lyubov Khochay
Maya Kirichonko
Maria Kalchik
Staff: Sonya Lutskaya

From Cambodia (Khmer)
Sary Kuk
Yoeun Noun
Sambath Soung
Staff: Sokha Hill

From Vietnam
Phung Nguyen
Hong Soe

From The Republic of China
Zhao Lian Ruan

Instructors:
Jane Weiss
May Pendergrass
Jo Eisner
Sue Zuchinni

Consultants:
Elizabeth Mitchell
Cathy Spagnoli
Judy deBarros

With funding assistance by
Washington State
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Adult Education Services
and the
King County Arts Commission

The Rabbit and the Tiger

A Cambodian Tale

The rabbit ran away from the tiger and he don't look down. So he fall in the well. But that well no water because it summer time. When he fall in the well, he don't have any idea how to get out from the well.

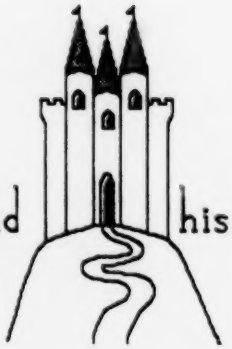
In that time, he saw the tiger outside the well, and say, "Oh, rabbit, you are in the well, so I can throw some rock on you. You will die." And rabbit he felt scared. So he say, "Oh, Tiger, I not fall in the well. I go in the well because I am scared the sky will fall down. You will die."

And tiger he scared the sky fall down, so he jump in the well. When he in the well with rabbit, the rabbit poke the tiger, and tiger say, "Don't poke me. If you still poke, I will throw you out, and sky will fall on you."

Rabbit keep poking the tiger, and tiger throw him out. When he was out of the well, rabbit run and tell people live in the village, and people came and caught the tiger.

The rabbit run away in that time.

The King and his Three Sons



There lived one King. He had three sons. Two sons they were very smart. The small one was a fool. His name was Ivan. The older brothers laughed at him. When they grew up, the King decided to get them married. He gave them three bows and arrows, and he said, "You will shoot, and in which country the arrow lands, you will find your wife." The oldest son's arrow was picked up by a beautiful Goldengirl. The second son's arrow was picked up by a smart girl named Tatyana. The third son Ivan's arrow landed in mud. He looked for his arrow for a long time, and he found his arrow in a frog. He was so upset. He picked up the frog and cried, and said, "I don't want a frog for a wife." The frog said to him, "Don't cry, Ivan. I will be a good wife for you, and I'll help you all your life."

When the older brothers saw his wife, they laughed at him. Their father said to his daughter-in-laws, "Each of you bake me a loaf of bread, and the daughter-in-law who bakes the best loaf will be my favorite daughter-in-law."

Ivan went to his house and he cried. But his wife Vasilisa was smart. She said to him, "My dear Ivan, go to bed. I will do everything." She went out. She threw away her frog skin, and she called her frog friends. But Ivan didn't sleep. He wanted to see how his wife would be baking the bread. He saw the frog skin, and near the oven he saw a pretty wife in a gold dress. She said to her husband Ivan, "Take this bread and give it to your father." Two older sons also brought their bread to their father, and their wives followed them. But Ivan wasn't there. And suddenly there was three gold horses and a wonderful queen. She was Ivan's wife. All were together. They had a party. The King said to his daughter-in-laws, "Whoever dances better, I will give you my kingdom." They all danced, and the best dancer was the smart Vasilisa, and the King decided to give all his kingdom to smart Vasilisa and his son.

The older sons didn't laugh at him any more. They cried because they didn't have a kingdom. But the young son Ivan and his wife, Vasilisa, were very happy.

Jonas the Fool and The Hen

A Tale from Eritria

Jonas' hen lays egg every day. His friendSami came and said, "Your hen lays one egg a day. Why don't you kill the hen and take out all the eggs once?" Jonas said, "OK" and killed the hen. He found only one egg. He was very mad.

Sami said, "Why don't you buy my hen? It lays gold every day." And he put one dollar in the hen. Sami say, "You will see." They wait, the hen lays the dollar.

Jonas bought the hen. He waited the next day, got nothing. And killed it the next day and got nothing. Now he had no hen. No egg. No dollar.

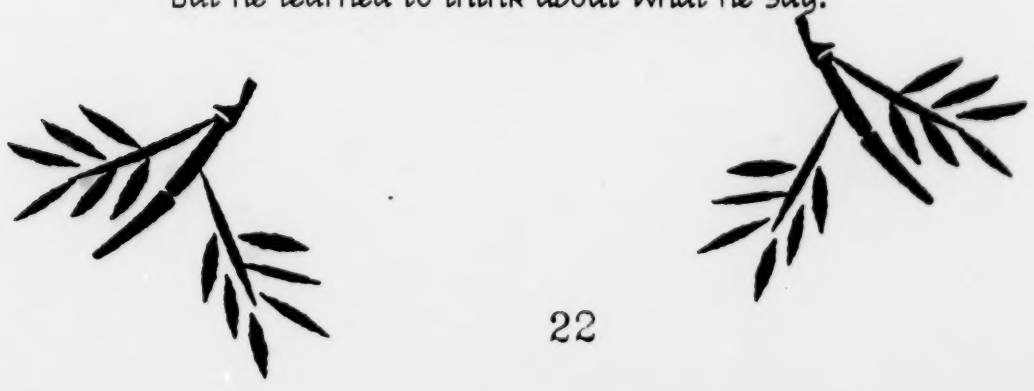
A Foolish Son-in-Law

A Chinese Tale

A rich man had three daughters. Two daughters married rich husbands. The youngest daughter married a fool.

One day, it was his father-in-law's birthday. His wife gave him some bamboo sticks. She told him, put one stick outside each door. When it is the last stick, it will be her father's house. His wife taught him to say, "Happy birthday. May every day is like today."

The fool went. He put one stick outside each door. He used some sticks to clean himself. Then he continued on his way. When he put down the last stick, he went in and said, "Happy birthday. May every day is like today." In the house, someone died. People heard that, they got angry. They chased him out. Someone outside told him, "You should say: don't be sad. Man dies like the light goes out." He reached his father-in-law's house. When he went in, he said to his father-in-law: "Don't be sad. Man dies like the light goes out." His father-in-law was angry. The fool was sad. But he learned to think about what he say.



The Heron and the Fish

A Tale from Laos

Once upon a time, a heron stood by a beautiful little lake for many days, watching the fish swimming in the water. He told the fish he was fasting and would not eat them. One day he told them of another bigger, more beautiful lake that he had seen and offered to take them there. "It is a bigger lake. You will have more room to swim around and have a good time."

The biggest fish who was the leader of the fish, said, "I will let you take me to see the big lake, then when I come back, we can decide."

So the heron held the big fish gently in his beak and took him to the new lake. He swam around all day, and had lots of fun exploring the new lake. Then the heron flew him back to his friends. The fish decided they would like to move to the big beautiful lake.

Each day, the heron flew some of the fish to the new lake, but he did not let them go into the lake. Instead he ate each one. At last there was only a small crab left in the little lake. He had watched the heron take each of the fish. The heron was hungry, so he wanted to eat the little crab, too.

"Crab, I will take you to the new lake to join your friends. Let me pick you up in my beak." The crab said, "No, I will hold on to your neck with my claws."

So the crab held on to the heron's neck, and they flew to the big lake. But looking down, the crab saw the bones of the fish that the heron had eaten. So the crab was angry. He asked the heron to take him down close to the water, and he could swim away.

The bird thought he could eat the crab as soon as he landed, but the crab did not let go. He pinched the bird's neck very hard with his claws and the bird died. So the crab lived very happily in the lake for the rest of his life.

23